

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
MINNEAPOLIS FEDERATION FOR JEWISH SERVICES

VIA TELEPHONE

Minneapolis, Minnesota
September 24, 1977

I deeply regret that I am unable to be with you tonight. I know I am missing a very special evening with some very special friends.

Although we are under some time constraints because I am unable to be physically present to address you, I do want to touch upon a couple of concerns about which I feel strongly and which we share, namely, human rights and Israel.

Concern for human rights has appropriately returned to the forefront of our concerns as a government. And, during this Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur season, all Americans should remind themselves that the principles of Judaism, as embodied in Jewish law, are a firm foundation of the human rights and human obligations that all of us seek to uphold.

The impact of Judaism and Jewish law has been printed indelibly upon America's social values and upon our laws. The major thrust of ancient Jewish law was the assertion that human rights is the protection of society's disadvantaged. The concepts of these rights and obligations are grounded in the Biblical conception of man.

Let me just cite some examples of the impact of Judaism upon our relatively young form of government.

Under Jewish law, the accused in a criminal trial was not permitted to testify against himself, even if he wished to do so voluntarily. The ban against self-incrimination was a prohibition, not merely a privilege. This protection is reflected in our own Fifth Amendment to the Constitution, although maybe less perfectly.

Freedom of thought and speech effectively became a right under Jewish law by virtue of the fact that intellectual activity was regarded as legally non-actionable. We can see the implications of this concern in the First Amendment.

Under Jewish tradition, the elderly have been assured not only of the rights enjoyed by other age groups, but also of respect, reverence and economic support.

Economic well-being was transformed into a right by the Halakhah. The courts were empowered to assess all citizens to give their fair share to sustain the poor, the orphan, the widow and other economically disadvantaged.

The laborer's rights to the rewards of his work long have been enshrined in Jewish law.

Yes, it is here in America that the Jewish concept of social and economic justice as the cornerstone of freedom was joined with the Jeffersonian and Jacksonian ideals of equality. Together they form a potent force--a force capable of guaranteeing that we remain a free, vibrant, open society in which all men and women can make the most of their God-given talent.

What does all this mean in the context of U.S.-Israeli relationships. It means there is more at stake than only military or security considerations.

The Jews of the world have made indispensable contributions to the humanity, freedom and civilization of mankind. These values are inherent in the State of Israel. If we fail to insure Israel's survival, it would mean the destruction of our own values and goals as a nation. For it is our own spiritual and moral ties to Israel which form the underpinning of our special relationship with that country.

I have followed developments in the Middle East closely ever since I first came to the Senate in 1949.

Recently, we have seen Middle Eastern scholars becoming increasingly critical of Israel. They maintain that demanding full recognition by the Arabs of Israel as a free and independent state constitutes insistence on an unnecessary legalism. I also have heard it is said that Israel is insisting on "political concessions" as a precondition to negotiations.

Yet, these criticisms obscure the central key word--peace. The necessary first moves to solve the Middle Eastern problem must be, as I see it, a commitment by both sides to an effort to reach an agreement that will result in a true peace. I believe Israel has made such a commitment. The Arabs apparently have not yet done so.

How can we expect Israel to announce prior to any negotiations that she is willing to give up large areas of territory, to move to a militarily more vulnerable position, if the other side, instead of committing itself to peace, merely suggests that it might consider moving to what is, in effect, a state of nonbelligerence?

I am not sure to what extent such a state of nonbelligerence differs from what we have now. Israel has every right to believe, until effectively shown otherwise, that what the Arabs are offering is a

nonbelligerence signifying merely that they will not be fighting them today, but are leaving their options open for tomorrow.

The recent Israeli election outcome and the statements of Menachem Begin have caused concern among many who fear an adverse effect on peace possibilities for the Middle East. But there remains every reason to believe that if the Arabs sincerely seek peace, Israel will be sufficiently forthcoming for peace to be concluded.

Mr. Begin has reaffirmed Israel's commitment to U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 and has publicly asserted a desire to enter face-to-face negotiations with Israel's neighboring Arab states on all open questions in dispute.

What I find truly inspiring about the spirit of the people of Israel is that 29 years after the creation of their state, 29 years in which the other side has been unwilling to make peace, in which Israel has been both under military attack and under terrorist attack against her civilian population, the vast majority of her people continue to offer the hand of peace and friendship. It is time for that hand to be clasped.

What we need in order to obtain a Middle East settlement is a commitment by both sides that when such a settlement is negotiated and agreed upon, both sides will, indeed, be committed to peace.

What we also need on the part of the United States is a continued commitment to U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. An imposed solution, supported by the threat of sanctions, is not consistent with our commitment to international law or to our moral and historic commitment to Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East.

Again, my friends, I deeply regret that I am unable to be with you in person tonight. But you may be assured that I am with you in spirit.

Gift

935-7721
447

Jay Jacobson

Dak Ridge
Foundry
Club

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
MINNEAPOLIS FEDERATION FOR JEWISH SERVICES
VIA TELEPHONE

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

SEPTEMBER 24, 1977

Harold Grossman - Dinner

Base - Jay Phillips

- Burton Japh

- Rudy Roschowitz - Chairman

Frank Fogelson (Exec Director)

Exec Comm

Simcha
Ambradentz - (Harold Goldenberg)
pseudonym.
(Moses Baron)

my
granddaughter
12

THE IMPACT OF JUDAISM AND JEWISH LAW HAS BEEN PRINTED INDELIBLY UPON AMERICA'S SOCIAL VALUES AND UPON OUR LAWS. THE MAJOR THRUST OF ANCIENT JEWISH LAW WAS THE ASSERTION THAT HUMAN RIGHTS IS THE PROTECTION OF SOCIETY'S DISADVANTAGED. THE CONCEPTS OF THESE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS ARE GROUNDED IN THE BIBLICAL CONCEPTION OF MAN.

LET ME JUST CITE SOME EXAMPLES OF THE IMPACT OF JUDAISM UPON OUR RELATIVELY YOUNG FORM OF GOVERNMENT

UNDER JEWISH LAW, THE ACCUSED IN A CRIMINAL TRIAL WAS NOT PERMITTED TO TESTIFY AGAINST HIMSELF, EVEN IF HE WISHED TO DO SO VOLUNTARILY. THE BAN AGAINST SELF-INCRIMINATION WAS A PROHIBITION, NOT MERELY A PRIVILEGE. THIS PROTECTION IS REFLECTED IN OUR OWN FIFTH AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION, ALTHOUGH MAYBE LESS PERFECTLY.

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND SPEECH EFFECTIVELY BECAME A RIGHT UNDER JEWISH LAW BY VIRTUE OF THE FACT THAT INTELLECTUAL ACTIVITY WAS REGARDED AS LEGALLY NON-ACTIONABLE. WE CAN SEE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS CONCERN IN THE FIRST AMENDMENT.

UNDER JEWISH TRADITION, THE ELDERLY HAVE BEEN ASSURED NOT ONLY OF THE RIGHTS ENJOYED BY OTHER AGE GROUPS, BUT ALSO OF RESPECT, REVERENCE AND ECONOMIC SUPPORT.

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING WAS TRANSFORMED INTO A RIGHT BY THE HALAKHAH. THE COURTS WERE EMPOWERED TO ASSESS ALL CITIZENS TO GIVE THEIR FAIR SHARE TO SUSTAIN THE POOR, THE ORPHAN, THE WIDOW AND OTHER ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED.

THE LABORER'S RIGHTS TO THE REWARDS OF HIS WORK LONG HAVE BEEN ENSHRINED IN JEWISH LAW.

I DEEPLY REGRET THAT I AM UNABLE TO BE WITH YOU TONIGHT. I KNOW I AM MISSING A VERY SPECIAL EVENING WITH SOME VERY SPECIAL FRIENDS.

ALTHOUGH WE ARE UNDER SOME TIME CONSTRAINTS BECAUSE I AM UNABLE TO BE PHYSICALLY PRESENT TO ADDRESS YOU, I DO WANT TO TOUCH UPON A COUPLE OF CONCERNS ABOUT WHICH I FEEL STRONGLY AND WHICH WE SHARE, NAMELY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND ISRAEL.

CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS HAS APPROPRIATELY RETURNED TO THE FOREFRONT OF OUR CONCERNS AS A GOVERNMENT. AND, DURING THIS ROSH HASHANAH AND YOM KIPPUR SEASON, ALL AMERICANS SHOULD REMIND THEMSELVES THAT THE PRINCIPLES OF JUDAISM, AS EMBODIED IN JEWISH LAW, ARE A FIRM FOUNDATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMAN OBLIGATIONS THAT ALL OF US SEEK TO UPHOLD.

✓ YES, IT IS HERE IN AMERICA, THAT THE JEWISH
CONCEPT OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE AS THE
CORNERSTONE OF FREEDOM WAS JOINED WITH THE
JEFFERSONIAN AND JACKSONIAN IDEALS OF EQUALITY,

✓ TOGETHER THEY FORM A POTENT FORCE -- A FORCE
CAPABLE OF GUARANTEEING THAT WE REMAIN A FREE,
VIBRANT, OPEN SOCIETY IN WHICH ALL MEN AND WOMEN
CAN MAKE THE MOST OF THEIR GOD-GIVEN TALENT.

✓ WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN IN THE CONTEXT OF
U. S. - ISRAELI RELATIONSHIPS ✓ IT MEANS THERE
IS MORE AT STAKE THAN ONLY MILITARY OR SECURITY
CONSIDERATIONS.

✓ THE JEWS OF THE WORLD HAVE MADE INDISPENSABLE
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE HUMANITY, FREEDOM AND
CIVILIZATION OF MANKIND. ✓ THESE VALUES ARE INHERENT
IN THE STATE OF ISRAEL.

↳ IF WE FAIL TO INSURE ISRAEL'S SURVIVAL, IT WOULD MEAN THE
DESTRUCTION OF OUR OWN VALUES AND GOALS AS A NATION,

↳ FOR IT IS OUR OWN SPIRITUAL AND MORAL TIES TO ISRAEL
WHICH FORM THE UNDERPINNING OF OUR SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP
WITH THAT COUNTRY.

↳ I HAVE FOLLOWED DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST
CLOSELY EVER SINCE I FIRST CAME TO THE SENATE IN 1949.

↳ RECENTLY, WE HAVE SEEN MIDDLE EASTERN SCHOLARS
BECOMING INCREASINGLY CRITICAL OF ISRAEL. Some
MAINTAIN THAT DEMANDING FULL RECOGNITION BY THE ARABS
OF ISRAEL AS A FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATE CONSTITUTES
INSISTENCE ON AN UNNECESSARY LEGALISM. I ALSO HAVE
HEARD IT SAID THAT ISRAEL IS INSISTING ON "POLITICAL
CONCESSIONS" AS A PRECONDITION TO NEGOTIATIONS.

↳ YET, THESE CRITICISMS OBSCURE THE CENTRAL KEY
WORD -- PEACE. ↳ THE NECESSARY FIRST MOVES TO SOLVE THE
MIDDLE EASTERN PROBLEM MUST BE, AS I SEE IT, A
COMMITMENT BY BOTH SIDES TO AN EFFORT TO REACH AN
AGREEMENT THAT WILL RESULT IN A TRUE PEACE. ↳ I
BELIEVE ISRAEL HAS MADE SUCH A COMMITMENT. ↳ THE
ARABS APPARENTLY HAVE NOT YET DONE SO.

↳ HOW CAN WE EXPECT ISRAEL TO ANNOUNCE PRIOR TO ANY
NEGOTIATIONS THAT SHE IS WILLING TO GIVE UP LARGE
AREAS OF TERRITORY, TO MOVE TO A MILITARILY MORE
VULNERABLE POSITION, IF THE OTHER SIDE, INSTEAD OF
COMMITTING ITSELF TO PEACE, MERELY SUGGESTS THAT IT
MIGHT CONSIDER MOVING TO WHAT IS, IN EFFECT, A STATE
OF NONBELLIGERENCE?

↳ I AM NOT SURE TO WHAT EXTENT SUCH A STATE OF
NONBELLIGERENCE DIFFERS FROM WHAT WE HAVE NOW.

ISRAEL HAS EVERY RIGHT TO BELIEVE, UNTIL EFFECTIVELY
SHOWN OTHERWISE, THAT WHAT THE ARABS ARE OFFERING IS
A NONBELLIGERENCE SIGNIFYING MERELY THAT THEY WILL
NOT BE FIGHTING THEM TODAY, BUT ARE LEAVING THEIR
OPTIONS OPEN FOR TOMORROW.

~~THE RECENT ISRAELI ELECTION OUTCOME AND THE
STATEMENTS OF ^{Premier} ~~MENACHEM~~ BEGIN HAVE CAUSED CONCERN
AMONG MANY WHO FEAR AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON PEACE
POSSIBILITIES FOR THE MIDDLE EAST. BUT THERE
REMAINS EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT IF THE ARABS
SINCERELY SEEK PEACE, ISRAEL WILL BE SUFFICIENTLY
FORTHCOMING FOR PEACE TO BE CONCLUDED.~~

^{P.M.}
MR. BEGIN HAS REAFFIRMED ISRAEL'S COMMITMENT
TO U. S. RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338 AND HAS PUBLICLY
ASSERTED A DESIRE TO ENTER FACE-TO-FACE NEGOTIATIONS
WITH ISRAEL'S NEIGHBORING ARAB STATES ON ALL OPEN
QUESTIONS IN DISPUTE.

WHAT I FIND TRULY INSPIRING ABOUT THE SPIRIT OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL IS THAT 29 YEARS AFTER THE CREATION OF THEIR STATE, 29 YEARS IN WHICH THE OTHER SIDE HAS BEEN UNWILLING TO MAKE PEACE, IN WHICH ISRAEL HAS BEEN BOTH UNDER MILITARY ATTACK AND UNDER TERRORIST ATTACK AGAINST HER CIVILIAN POPULATION, THE VAST MAJORITY OF HER PEOPLE CONTINUE TO OFFER THE HAND OF PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP. IT IS TIME FOR THAT HAND TO BE CLASPED.

WHAT WE NEED IN ORDER TO OBTAIN A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT IS A COMMITMENT BY BOTH SIDES THAT WHEN SUCH A SETTLEMENT IS NEGOTIATED AND AGREED UPON, BOTH SIDES WILL, INDEED, BE COMMITTED TO PEACE.

WHAT WE ALSO NEED ON THE PART OF THE UNITED STATES IS A CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO U. N. SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338 AN IMPOSED SOLUTION, SUPPORTED BY THE THREAT OF SANCTIONS, IS NOT CONSISTENT

WITH OUR COMMITMENT TO INTERNATIONAL LAW OR TO OUR
MORAL AND HISTORIC COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL, ~~THE ONLY~~
~~DEMOCRACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST.~~

AGAIN, MY FRIENDS, I DEEPLY REGRET THAT I AM
UNABLE TO BE WITH YOU IN PERSON TONIGHT. BUT YOU MAY
BE ASSURED THAT I AM WITH YOU IN SPIRIT.



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org